



**National Science and Technology Council (NSTC)
Committee on Environment & Natural Resources (CENR)
U.S. Group on Earth Observations (USGEO)**

CHARTER

I. PURPOSE

The U.S. Group on Earth Observations (USGEO) is hereby established by action of the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources (CENR) of the National Science and Technology Council (NSTC). The USGEO operates under the guidelines established by NSTC for a subcommittee.

II. GOALS

The primary goals of the subcommittee are, (1) to continue development and coordination of the U.S. Integrated Earth Observation System (IEOS). IEOS should address environmental and societal needs, including an assessment of current observational capabilities (both remote and *in situ*), an evaluation of requirements to sustain and evolve these capabilities, an assessment of how to integrate current observational capabilities across scales, and an evaluation of data gaps and research and development needs; and (2) to formulate the U.S. position and coordinate participation in the intergovernmental Group on Earth Observations (GEO) as formed at the third Earth Observation Summit on February 16, 2005.

III. FUNCTIONS

To accomplish Goal (1), USGEO will develop strategies for efficient and streamlined operations for the U.S. Integrated Earth Observation System and will further the work accomplished by the Interagency Working Group on Earth Observations in leading and coordinating the implementation of this multi-year U.S. plan on Earth observations. This subcommittee will have responsibility for periodic assessment of the multi-year U.S. plan, as well as periodic reports to the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources on progress and recommendations.

Initial USGEO functions include:

- Identify requirements, both within the government and with external stakeholders, including continued review and assessment of existing and emerging societal benefit areas, architecture/ data utilization, and capacity building/ international cooperation.
- Establish an ongoing process for planning, developing, and managing integrated cross-agency earth observations programs that includes
 - Identification of existing and needed observing systems, the requirements for systems integration, and related research and development;
 - Prioritization of observations system investments to include agency roles, assessment of technological readiness, and societal impact
 - Develop detailed plans, including budget requirements, for development/implementation of near-term opportunities
 - Review mechanisms and metrics to validate quality, relevance, and performance of integrated programs; and
 - Annual reporting on activities to the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, including near-term priorities for the upcoming budget year at the end of each calendar year.
- Establish processes for data management, including standards, interoperability, and an open, scalable architecture.
- Establish a process for outreach to and interaction with external stakeholders, consistent with the Federal Advisory Committee Act.
- Establish a process for outreach to and interaction with regional, state, and local entities.
- Identify commercial observation networks and international systems that can be utilized in achieving the vision of the U.S. Integrated Earth Observation System.
- .

To address Goal (2), USGEO will continue to formulate U.S. positions and inputs into the Global Earth Observation System of Systems, taking into account the full range of U.S. policies and interests, and the requirements of the widest range of decision-makers, researchers, service-providers, the public and other stakeholders worldwide.

To carry out these functions, the USGEO will actively solicit inputs from CENR member agencies and other CENR subcommittees, as well as from other government entities and nongovernmental sources, in a manner consistent with FACA regulations.

IV. CHAIRS AND MEMBERSHIP

USGEO Co-Chairs are senior officials from government agencies. The current set of Co-chairs is comprised of officials from NOAA, NASA, and OSTP. USGEO membership consists of representatives from CENR member agencies and from other Federal

government entities, as appropriate. Chairs of CENR subcommittees serve as *ex officio* members of the USGEO, which does not exclude their possible direct appointment to the USGEO by their agency's CENR representative. The USGEO may form an Executive Committee where necessary, composed of the Co-Chairs and member representatives.

V. TERMINATION DATE

Unless renewed by the Co-Chairs of CENR, the USGEO shall terminate on December 31, 2007.

VI. DETERMINATION

We hereby determine that formation of the CENR U.S. Group on Earth Observations is in the public interest in connection with the performance of duties imposed on the Executive Branch by law and that such duties can best be performed through the advice and counsel of such a group.

Approved:

Ron Birk, NASA
CENR Federal Agency Co-Chair

Greg Withee, NOAA
CENR Federal Agency Co-Chair

Teresa Fryberger, OSTP
CENR White House Co-Chair